#10
MOONSTONE
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THE PHANTOM
GHOST WHO WALKS
Mike Bullock
Silvestre Szilagyi

THE PHANTOM™

GHOST WHO WALKS

created by LEE FALK

For those who came in late...

NEARLY 500 YEARS AGO ON A REMOTE BARBALLAN BEACH, ONLY ONE SURVIVED A VICIOUS PIRATE ATTACK.
THE FIRST PHANTOM SWORE A SACRED OATH ON THE SKULL OF HIS FATHER'S KILLER.
...WILL DEVOTE MY LIFE TO THE DESTRUCTION OF PIRACY, GREED, CRUELTY AND INJUSTICE!
GENERATION AFTER GENERATION FOLLOWED, BUT TO THE OUTSIDE WORLD, HE WAS ALWAYS ONE MAN... IMMORTAL.
NOW THE 21ST PHANTOM HAUNTS THE NIGHTMARES OF EVIL MEN EVERYWHERE.

"GODFALL" part three

WRITTEN BY **MIKE BULLOCK**
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SPECIAL THANKS TO
OUR PHANTOM CONSULTANT
ED RHOADES

AND TO **KAREN MOY**
AT KING FEATURES

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HOW TALL DO YOU HAVE TO BE TO RIDE THIS RIDE, ANYWAY?
YOUR FATE IS MET, PHANTOM!

AND NOW, BY MY HOLY DECREE, I SHALL WAVE YOU SLAIN FOR BLASPHEMY!
WHAT IS THIS, SOME KIND OF JOKE?
SILENCE!
YOU WILL LISTEN TO THE CHARGES BROUGHT AGAINST YOU.
FIRST, YOU DARE TO DISRUPT HIM'S RIGHT TO DRAFT WORTHY SOLDIERS!
THEN YOU HAVE THE AUDACITY TO INTERFERE WITH HIM'S INDOCTRINATION RITUALS!
YOU ARE ALSO CHARGED WITH THE CRIME OF SPYING ON HIM!

YOU COMPOUNDED YOUR CRIMES BY PLACING YOUR FILTHY HANDS ON HIM'S PERSONAL GUARDS.
BUT, YOUR WICKEDNESS KNEW NO BOUNDS AS YOU TAINTED THE ROYAL BEDCHAMBER WITH YOUR VILE PRESENCE.
HAD YOU SIMPLY REPENTED WHEN YOU WERE FIRST CAPTURED, HIM'S MERCY MIGHT HAVE POURED OUT ON YOU...
HOWEVER, YOU CHOSE TO CONTINUE YOUR EVIL WAYS.
YET ALL OF THESE CRIMES ARE NOTHING IN THE LIGHT OF YOUR WORST OFFENSE, PHANTOM!

IF YOU BUT FALL TO YOUR KNEES NOW AND WORSHIP HIM, YOU SHALL BE FORGIVEN.
WE BOTH KNOW THAT'S NOT GOING TO HAPPEN.
THEN, YOUR STORY HAS COME TO AN END--
BLASPHEMER.
AND TODAY--
IS THE DAY YOU DIE.
DIDN'T HIM TELL YOU LEGENDS NEVER DIE-
WELL?

Y-YOU ARE NOT A L-LEGEND. JUST A MAN WHOSE MISERABLE LIFE WILL END TODAY!
AND YOU ARE NOT HIM NOW. EVERYONE PUT DOWN THE GUNS AND TELL ME WHAT'S GOING ON HERE.
Y-YOU DO-DO NOT GIVE THE OR-ORDERS HERE!
AND FROM THE LOOKS OF IT~
NEITHER DO YOU.
...
KILL HIM!

BLAM!
BLAM!
BLAM!

FOR HIM!
YOU SHOULD FOLLOW THEM, COWARD.
I AM NOT A COWARD!
YOU ARE THE ONE WHO HAS CRIED HIMSELF TO SLEEP EVERY NIGHT SINCE WE CAME HERE!
COME WITH ME, WE CANNOT LET THE BLASPHEMER ESCAPE!
W-WHAT ARE YOU STARING AT--?
PAPA...
I-I-I-WANT TO GO H-HOME, PAPA...

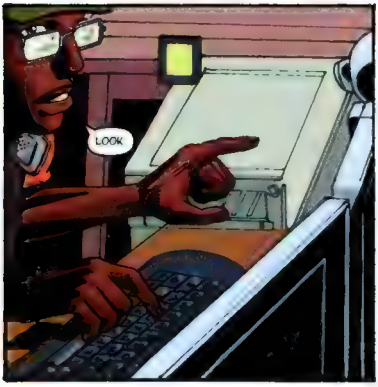
IF GROWN MEN CAN'T SURVIVE THE HORRORS OF WAR, WHAT HOPE DO THESE POOR KIDS HAVE?
GET HIM!
YEAH!
COME ON!
I NEED TO PUT A STOP TO THIS ONCE AND FOR ALL-
MAYBE THAT ONE CAN HELP ME PULL THIS OUT BY THE ROOTS.
RRAAH!

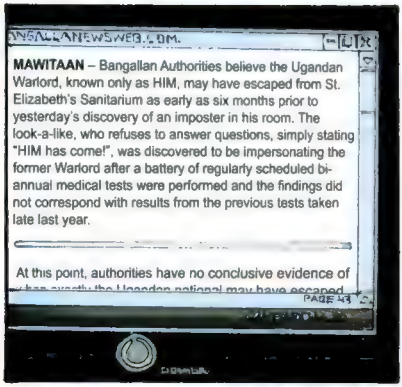
AND WHAT IS ALL THIS FOR, YOUNG CHANE?
THE SAME THING THAT STUFF WAS FOR WHEN IT WAS NEW GURAN
NOW THAT JUNK BELONGS IN A MUSEUM
CIVILIZATION HAS REALLY SUNK ITS TEETH IN YOU, HASN'T IT? BUT THE ZEAL FOR TECHNOLOGICAL INNOVATION CAN'T FILL THE EMPTINESS BEING "CIVILIZED" BRINGS, CAN IT?
YOU SOUND JUST LIKE MY GRANDFATHER I'D FIGURE YOU OF ALL PEOPLE WOULD UNDERSTAND THE BENEFITS OF EMBRACING BOTH WORLDS
I DO, CHANE. I DO BUT THERE IS STILL A PART OF ME THAT YEARNS FOR A TIME BEFORE MAN AND MACHINE BECAME ONE
BAM!

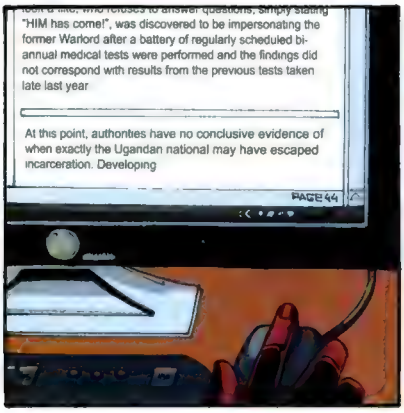
WELCOME TO THE TWENTY FIRST CENTURY, GURAN NOW, TIME TO DO SOME DETECTIVE WORK
THOSE DATES CORRESPOND WITH THE MISSING PERSONS PHANTOM WAS INVESTIGATING RECENTLY *
AND DOESN'T THAT MOSQUE LOOK FAMILIAR?
PHANTOM WAS RIGHT THESE AREN'T JUST A SERIES OF UNRELATED EVENTS
AND IF WHAT HE SUSPECTED IS TRUE
THAT'S IT!
*SEE PHANTOM GHOST WHO WALKS #5 -GHOST WHO EDITS

YESTERDAY
Ugandan Warlord "HIM" Escaped from Sanitarium.
Child Soldiers Suspected to Have Freed Self- Proclaimed Messiah.

BUT, HOW COULD HE MASTERMIND ALL OF THIS IF HE JUST ESCAPED?


LOOK


BANGALLANEWSWEB.COM.
MAWITAAN – Bangallan Authorities believe the Ugandan Warlord, known only as HIM, may have escaped from St. Elizabeth's Sanitarium as early as six months prior to yesterday's discovery of an imposter in his room. The look-a-like, who refuses to answer questions, simply stating "HIM has come!", was discovered to be impersonating the former Warlord after a battery of regularly scheduled bi-annual medical tests were performed and the findings did not correspond with results from the previous tests taken late last year.
At this point, authorities have no conclusive evidence of
PAGE 43


"HIM has come!", was discovered to be impersonating the former Warlord after a battery of regularly scheduled bi-annual medical tests were performed and the findings did not correspond with results from the previous tests taken late last year.
At this point, authorities have no conclusive evidence of when exactly the Ugandan national may have escaped incarceration. Developing
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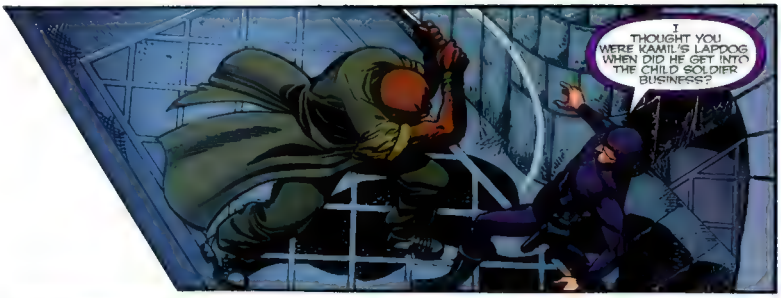
IT SEEMS THE PHANTOM ISN'T THE ONLY GHOST WALKING IN AFRICA TODAY

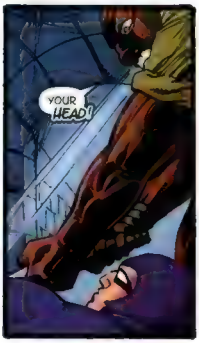
MUTAZZ ABBAS. I'D SAY YOU'RE A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES, BUT I DON'T LIKE TO LIE

I HAVE DREAMED OF THIS MOMENT EVERY NIGHT SINCE LAST WE MET, PHANTOM*
FUNNY, MOST INMATES DREAM OF WOMEN

RAAAAUHH!


I THOUGHT YOU WERE KAMIL'S LAPDOG WHEN DID HE GET INTO THE CHILD SOLDIER BUSINESS?

KAMIL IS ON HIS OWN. I WORK FOR THE HIGHEST BIDDER, AND MY PAYCHECK FOR THIS MISSION COMES WITH A BONUS-


YOUR HEAD!

KRUNK
*SEE PHANTOM GHOST WHO WALKS #3 -GHOST WHO EDITS

YEAAHHHH!
YOU CANNOT RETREAT FOREVER, PHANTOM!
THIS ISN'T RETREATING-
KOR
AAAAH!
I'LL KILL YOU!

RAAAA!
WHAM!
YOU AGAIN?
THERE IS THE BLASPHEMER!
SHOOT HIM!
THIS JUST GETS WORSE BY THE MINUTE.
DON'T LET HIM ESCAPE!

I TOLD YOU TO SHOOT HIM. WHY DID YOU LET HIM GO?
I DID SHOOT. HE IS LIKE A GHOST!
THEN YOU ARE A TERRIBLE SOLDIER. MUST I TEACH YOU HOW TO SHOOT AGAIN?
I TELL YOU, I SHOT HIM!
YOU ARE WRONG AND STUPID!
AM NOT! YOU ARE STUPID!
I WILL HAVE YOU WHIPPED!
NOT IF I HAVE YOU WHIPPED FIRST!
YOU CANNOT DO SUCH A THING
WHAT IS THIS, A CONVENTION?

YOUR INTERFERENCE COST US GREATLY, PHANTOM ZAAL IS VERY ANGRY
I GET THE DISTINCT FEELING ZAAL ISN'T THE ONLY BOGUS "GOD" YOU'RE SERVING THESE DAYS, MATATA
THERE IS ONLY ONE TRUE GOD!

LET ME GUESS-
WOULD HIS NAME BE-
BLASPHEMER!
DO NOT SAY HIS NAME!
RAAAAA!
I TIRE OF YOUR INTERFERENCE, PHANTOM!
DIE!

SCHMASH

HWAK

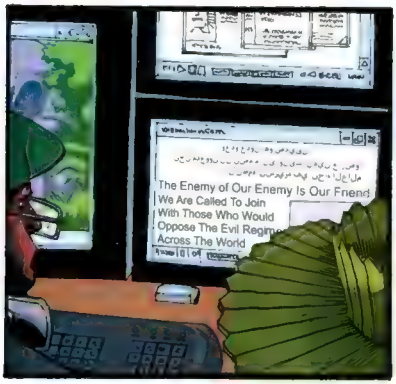
UHHHHHH...

VHVAP

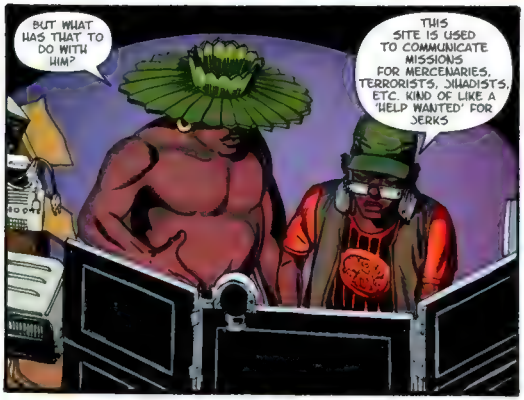
THAT'S ALL YOU'VE GOT?

KOU-TYNUK

WHUMP
SMACK
MAYBE I SHOULD TIE YOU TWO UP, SO YOU DON'T GET INTO ANY MORE TROUBLE
WHU-
THWAP
THAT SHOULD AMUSE THE MOB


The Enemy of Our Enemy Is Our Friend
We Are Called To Join
With Those Who Would
Oppose The Evil Regime
Across The World

I DON'T UNDERSTAND
THIS IS A GHOST SITE, BURIED UNDER A WEBPAGE FOR A UNIVERSITY NEAR THE MOSQUE KAMIL KAZI USED AS A FRONT


BUT WHAT HAS THAT TO DO WITH HIM?
THIS SITE IS USED TO COMMUNICATE MISSIONS FOR MERCENARIES, TERRORISTS, JIHADISTS, ETC. KIND OF LIKE A 'HELP WANTED' FOR JERKS

SEEMS HIM REALIZED HIS CHILD SOLDIERS WEREN'T ENOUGH AND HE HIRED SOME PROFESSIONALS NAMELY MU'TAZZ ABBAS, AND SOMEONE NAMED MATATA

MATATA, HE WAS THE LEADER OF THE ORGAN THIEVES POSING AS THE EASTERN DARK
RIGHT THAT WAS A FRONT TO GET MONEY FOR HIM'S ESCAPE AND HIS NEW "MISSION"

AND JUST WHAT IS HIS NEW MISSION?

REVENGE.

WE HAVE WAITED SO VERY LONG FOR THIS
WE MUST REMAIN PATIENT, HOWEVER. SAVOR THIS VICTORY. SLOWLY
YES. AS THEY SAY. IT IS BEST SERVED-
COLD.
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
FINALLY. THE TIME HAS ARRIVED
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!

YES, MY CHILDREN. VENGEANCE IS OURS!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
DEATH!
To Be Continued

Domino Lady
NOIR
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BEHIND THE MASK

The Phantom: Science Fiction and Fantasy
By Ed Rhoades

Lee Falk had different ideas about Science Fiction. Much of what would be considered sci fi today, including some Phantom stories; Lee felt just didn't fit the category. To understand the context of his reasoning, it's important to know that he was writing comic strips only five years after the debut of Buck Rogers and less than five months after Flash Gordon made its first appearance. He was creating adventure stories long before the term sci fi was coined. When I asked him specifically about the Phantom's visits to the realms of science fiction, he used the term "space opera."

Today, the division between categories of science fiction and fantasy is perhaps more blurred than ever, and Lee drew from a rich knowledge and experience of the theatre for inspiration. He loved the tales of 'Camelot' which featured aspects of fantasy and magic, with this in mind, it's not too much of a stretch for him to create a story about Queen Samaris, a 300 year old woman reminiscent of H. Rider Haggard's *She*. However, his adventure unfolds as a tale passed around at a campfire with a disclaimer about exaggerated Phantom legends with the Phantom prefacing it with the statement "No, I never killed a gorilla with a toothpick."

Lee and I discussed the 'Little People' who have been a theme that he returned to on occasion with the last sequence explaining they were stranded visitors from space. I reasoned that he had carried them from the realm of fantasy into the realm of sci fi. He disagreed explaining they were more of a folklore legend or jungle myth.

Lee constructed a story that may have been inspired by *Brigadoon*. It was called *The Lost City of Phoenix* and it came to the Phantom in a dream he had after being knocked unconscious in a confrontation with a tiger.

In stories about natives and witch men, the power of suggestion plays an important part. His other character, Mandrake the Magician initially was more steeped in fantasy, but Mandrake like powers can be found in the Phantom story, *The Drummer of Timpenni*, a tale in which a drummer creates hypnotic effects with his rhythms.

Lee presented ancient creatures like dinosaurs, but their presence in the Phantom's world was sometimes explained by the existence of robotic creations for a rich king or an egg preserved by amber like the DNA in *Jurassic Park* or simply some phenomenon that escaped the trappings of the modern world like his cave monsters on Eden or strange undersea creatures. One of his last stories, called simply *Dig* in December of 1996, features a dinosaur left over and undetected by the modern world.

Lee had the Phantom encounter giant birds that carried him more than once. Yet, he would occasionally remind us with a twinkle in his eye, that things about the Phantom tend to get exaggerated and he would show how the story would evolve while being retold as part of jungle folklore. Moreover, we were allowed an insight into the making of jungle legends and old jungle sayings.

There was one theme that Lee relished and it was done repeatedly in the comics and in the strip. Drawn by Wilson McCoy in a daily, it was called *The Horned Star Demons*, extraterrestrials with mighty technology who came here to test the capacities of the human species. Later, the story was repeated, and then came a similar story with a giant blue figure the Phantom had to combat. The final version of the basic story occurred near the end of Lee's tenure on the strip…only this time it was four gods testing the Phantom.

Lee resisted those who wanted the Phantom to have supernatural powers in other media like *Defenders of the Earth*. He told me that they suggested the Phantom sprout wings to which he replied "I would have no part of that." He understood that much of the Phantom's appeal came from the fact that unlike many other superheroes, he was human with human frailties and limitations. Still, his creative imagination found ways to introduce elements of what would today be regarded as science fiction and fantasy without having them change the demeanor of the Phantom's humanity. With explanations of imagination, science and folklore, he managed to have it both ways enriching his stories by occasionally approaching the edges of reality.

COMING THIS FALL!

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grim avenger of the skies--- enemy of spies and saboteurs

The Return of

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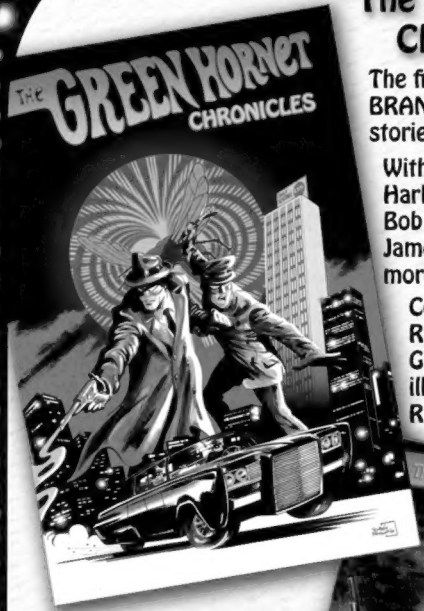

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